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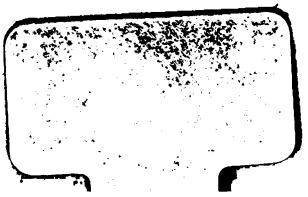

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THE

MYSTERIOUS

Gentleman Farmer;

OR, THE

DISGUISES OF LOVE.

VOLUME III.

THE

MYSTERIOUS Gentleman Farmer;

OR,

THE DISGUISES OF LOVE:

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY JOHN CORRY,

Author of "A Satyrical View of London," &c. &c.

VOL. III.

Love, various minds does variously inspire,
It stirs in gentle Nature's gentle fire,
Like that of incense on the altar laid;
But raging flames tempestuous souls invade;
A fire that ev'ry windy passion blows,
With Pride it mounts, and with Revenge it glows.

DRYDEN.

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THE MYSTERIOUS GENTLEMAN FARMER.

CHAPTER I.

Mr. Sotheran arrives in Cadiz—Narrative of the misfortunes of Fernandez and Catherina—A Spanish Merchant executed for assassination—A short description of Madrid and its inhabitants.

As England and Spain were on terms of amity, Mr. Sotheran was permitted to view the batteries and arsenal at Cadiz. The general appearance of the city had little to re-

commend it to the attention of the traveller; but several of the merchants were opulent. An important branch of their traffic consisted in their exports to Buenos Ayres and Monte Video, in South America, and the galleons annually brought them a return in dollars.

When Mr. Sotheran arrived in Cadiz, the chief topic of public conversation was the misfortunes of a sailor and his wife, whose history was marked with some very peculiar circumstances. Kelly, who mingled more with the common people than his master, first heard the story, and as he knew the sensibility of Mr. So-

Sotheran, he hastened to communicate the narrative.

Fernandez Gaston was the son of a Spanish fisherman, and from his infancy he devoted his whole attention to maritime pursuits. In his twelfth year he was bound apprentice to the captain of a merchantman; and, during several voyages, he became an experienced seaman, as remarkable for his intrepidity as his skill. He had particularly distinguished himself against the piratical marauders of Tunis and Algiers, and was gradually promoted from being a man before the mast, to the respectable situation of se-

cond mate in the Columbus, one of the galleons which were annually sent to South America for dollars.

As Fernandez was, in common with other officers, permitted to take a small venture from Spain, he soon acquired a handsome property, which he bestowed, together with his hand and heart, on Catherina, a young woman of Cadiz, who had nothing but her beauty, virtue, and love to recommend her to her enamoured husband.

Part of the property acquired by her husband was, soon after their nuptials, laid out in goods to furnish a mi-

a milliner's shop; and, during the absence of her affectionate sailor, she was solicitous to improve the property committed to her charge.

From the nature of her business Catherina was visited by several genteel people of both sexes. Her shop was in an advantageous situation, near the entrance to one of the public walks, and it soon became a place of resort for some of the most fashionable ladies and gentlemen of Cadiz.

Unfortunately for the amiable Catherina, her personal attractions engaged the attention of several cox-

combs; and, notwithstanding her modest behaviour, her maternal fondness for Frederic, and the firm and dignified manner in which she rejected the flattery of fools, she was pestered by the daily visits of young merchants.

All their flatteries and insinuations were in vain, and the conjugal fidelity of Catherina triumphed over the solicitations of all who had the audacity to address her, except Carlos Vandamor. He was the eldest son of one of the most opulent merchants in Cadiz; he had been spoiled by the culpable indulgence of his mother, and having access to her

her purse, he revelled at large in the indulgence of his passions.

The beauty of Catherina inflamed the heart of this amorous young Spaniard; and as he was handsome, rich, and enterprising, he addressed her with a confidence that excited her indignation. She desired him to discontinue his visits, but he redoubled his efforts; she threatened to expose him to public execration, by demanding the protection of the police, but he laughed at her menace, and cursed the magistrates and the laws. "I will acknowledge no laws but those of love;" said he, "your beauty has captivated my heart, and it is

only your compassion, adorable Catherina, that can restore my happiness!" "Alas! Sir," replied the modest woman, "I compassionate you with all my heart, and I grieve to see a young gentleman so far forget the decorum of society, as wantonly to endeavour to seduce the wife of another. Cease, Sir, your fruitless importunities, and leave me to the unmolested pursuit of my business, which, as well as my character, must be injured by the continuance of your visits." Thus did Catherina remonstrate, but her remonstrances were lost upon a wretched man who was deaf to every

thing

thing but the suggestions of criminal desire.

While Catherina was thus persecuted by the insolence of a lover, her faithful Fernandez was active in his maritime and commercial pursuits. He had now made four successful voyages to Buenos Ayres since his lovely consort made him the happiest of men, by rewarding his love with a son, and he was preparing to return once more to Cadiz with an increase of property, which would secure a competence to his wife and child, and thus realize all his wishes.

But prosperity and happiness are not the same, as Catherina, to her great regret discovered; for such was the preposterous behaviour of Carlos, that to preserve her character, the amiable milliner was obliged to sell her goods by wholesale and retire to the house of a maiden aunt, who lived in the neighbourhood of the city.

Her retirement was invaded by the audacious Carlos, but he was repulsed with disdain; he was therefore obliged to disguise his person in order to obtain admittance to her presence.

A report that one of the homeward bound galleons had foundered, excited a general emotion of alarm in Cadiz, and Carlos, availing himself of the opportunity, went in the disguise of a sailor, to the suburb where Catherina resided. Assuming an air of the deepest concern, he reported that he was a seaman belonging to the Hispaniola, a galleon which had just arrived; that, during their voyage, in company with the Columbus, they had encountered a storm, and had the mortification to behold that ship sink without the possibility of rendering her any assistance.

This dreadful news flew like lightning, and was too soon communicated to the unfortunate Catherina, whose aunt, more incredulous, sent for the sailor to learn all the particulars. Carlos performed his part with all the address of an adept in the art of intrigue. He was admitted into the apartment where poor Catherina sat clasping her little Frederic to her breast, in speechless affliction; and he related his story with such an air of simple sincerity, as to leave his hearers no doubt of its authenticity.

He then retired, leaving his devoted victim in a state of misery, which

which testified her unalterable love for her husband. This circumstance would have discouraged a common adventurer in an amour, but Carlos was not to be intimidated, and he had no doubt that when the grief of Catherina was mitigated by time, that he should succeed in his endeavours to subvert her virtue.

There was now no time to be lost, as the arrival of the galleon was daily expected by those who hoped the report that she was lost was groundless. But even if Fernandez should arrive in safety, Carlos resolved

solved to destroy him, as a rival who impeded his happiness.

In less than a week the Columbus arrived at Cadiz. Her approach was announced by signals, and the relatives of the seamen hastened to the pier to receive them. The news was spread in a moment throughout the city; and the people expressed their satisfaction by shouts of joy. This unexpected intelligence was communicated to the fair Catherina, and the transition from sorrow to joy almost overpowered her spirits.

Hasten-

Hastening on the wings of love and expectation, she reached the pier-head just as the Columbus saluted the royal batteries; the vessel was steered into the dock by the skilful helmsman; Catherina gazed on the crew with anxious suspense, and beheld Fernandez at his post giving orders to the seamen;—he was alive —it was enough—and his affectionate consort sunk into the arms of her companions.

* * * * *
* * * * *

To describe the joy, the pleasure, the rapture that animated the tender heart

heart of Catherina and her sailor, would be impossible; those who have loved with equal ardour and fidelity can, alone, imagine their felicity. She clasped him in her arms, as one restored from the devouring ocean; and he beheld her as the polar star of all his earthly happiness.

To his surprise Fernandez was informed that his wife discontinued business; and when he learnt the cause of that retirement, his indignation was justly excited against the disturber of her tranquillity. On consideration, however, he thought it adviseable to retire from Cadiz; and

and as he had now acquired a considerable property, he proposed to devote the remainder of his days to the calm delights of domestic life. Accompanied by his beloved wife, who leaned upon his arm, he hastened to embrace their little son, and beheld him with all a father's fondness, improved in stature and beauty.

While Fernandez and Catherina were thus enjoying all the chaste delights of connubial love, the malignant Carlos was informed of the safe arrival of the mariner.—He execrated the blameless man, whom he had the madness to consider as a

rival

rival; and instigated by the frenzy of jealous and criminal passion, he resolved to destroy Fernandez in the presence of Catherina. "Since she has made me miserable," exclaimed he, in a tone of desperation, "she shall also taste the bitter cup of affliction."

With this determination, Carlos armed himself with a dagger and a pair of loaded pistols, and went in disguise to the late residence of Catherina. But the devoted and innocent lovers were not there; for Catherina, sensible of the violence and impetuosity of the young merchant, prevailed on her husband to remove his

his family without delay to a distant part of Cadiz, and thus elude the malice of Carlos, till they could with propriety quit the city altogether.

Fernandez, naturally brave, despised the idea of concealment. There was no man in the world whom the gallant seaman would have avoided, from motives of fear; but the tender solicitude, and eloquent persuasions of his wife, prevailed over his generous feelings, and he consented to a temporary seclusion, for her sake.

Fernan-

Fernandez had now received his wages, and disposed of his venture from South America, on advantageous terms. In compliance with the advice of his wife, he purchased a small estate, at the distance of ten leagues from Cadiz, and thither he secretly retired, to avoid the resentment of an injurious individual, whom he despised.

In the delightful residence of Frejos, Fernandez lived unmolested during a year. His seat was situated amid the most interesting objects. Vineyards, olive-yards, cottages, orchards, and gardens, appeared in charming variety; while the

the affection of Catherina, and the playful gaiety of Frederic converted this retirement into a sublunary paradise.

But Fernandez was yet in his prime; the stillness of rural life was not in unison with the activity of his mind; he longed once again to explore distant regions of the globe, and return with well-earned treasure to his beloved wife and son; nor could his consort dissuade him from another voyage, and this he promised should be the last indeed.

With her concurrence he once more visited Cadiz, and in consequence

quence of his former propriety of conduct and abilities he was appointed first mate of a vessel bound for South America.

During this period of uninterrupted tranquillity, the vindictive Carlos had in vain sought the retreat of his rival; he employed several accomplices, and offered them a liberal reward, if they should discover the abode of Fernandez, but they explored Cadiz and its environs in vain.

The return of Fernandez to the city, and his appearance on board a vessel, was speedily announced to Car-

Carlos; who, with fatal eagerness prepared for the work of death. In the disguise of a peasant he went down to the harbour, and under pretence of viewing the shipping, he had an opportunity of beholding the man whom his criminal passions had so long doomed to destruction. He attended to every motion of Fernandez with fatal vigilance, and when the seaman went ashore, and mounting his horse, set out for Frejos, the infatuated merchant pursued him to the door of his mansion.

Convinced that he had now discovered the retreat of Catherina, he retired

retired to a neighbouring village, and stopped at an inn. Here his mind was tormented with a conflict of the passions. He was conscious that both the husband and wife were innocent; they had done him no wrong; he himself was alone culpable; would it not be more generous, more noble, more virtuous to relinquish this unjustifiable pursuit, than to add one crime to another? These reasons operated so powerfully on his mind, that for a moment he resolved to return to the city without the perpetration of the crime to which he had been instigated by lawless passion.

But

But this good resolution lasted only during the lucid interval of his mental malady. His cruel determination was renewed with redoubled ardour at the moment he put his foot in the stirrup to mount his horse, and instead of returning to Cadiz he proceeded, about ten o'clock at night, to the peaceful abode of his victim.

The full moon rising with majestic glory, diffused her light over the landscape:—it was spring, and the voice of the nightingale resounded from the adjacent coppices; the barking of dogs, and the murmur of a brook were all the other sounds

that invaded the stillness of a mild vernal night, except the noise made by the feet of the assassin's horse as he galloped over the flinty causeway with the rapidity of a whirlwind, while his progress was marked by sparks of fire. It was the visitation of death to Fernandez!

That worthy man was sitting in a parlour with Frederic on his knee, while the hand of Catherina was clasped in his, and he was assuring her of his resolution never to undertake another voyage, but to devote the residue of his days to her and to happiness, on his return. Tears of

tender sorrow stole down the cheeks of his beautiful and afflicted spouse; and their son, who was unconscious of the cause of his mother's grief, was bidding her not cry, when a loud rap at the door, announced a visitor.

In a moment a servant entered to inform his master that a stranger wished to see him; he was ordered to admit the visitor, and Carlos walked into the parlour with an air of haughtiness that rather surprised Fernandez.

"My business," said the unknown visitor, addressing himself to Fer-

nandez, "is with you ,it is of some importance to us both, and can be better transacted without witnesses." Fernandez made a motion to Catherina to retire; she rose, and catching Frederic to her palpitating bosom, was going out of the apartment, when casting a penetrating glance on the stranger, she knew him through his disguise. With a shriek of terror she exclaimed,—"My husband——it is Carlos, the disturber of our lives, that stands before you!" "Carlos! repeated the husband, springing forward and seizing the assassin by the throat, but the monster was too quick for him, and plunging his dagger into the breast

of the unfortunate Fernandez, he cried out with a voice of triumph whilst his opponent fell bleeding at his feet.—

"Perish, thou obstacle to my passion—now my revenge is satiated." His words were unheard by the amiable and unhappy woman, whose beauty had been so fatal to the man she loved, and while the servants, almost overcome with terror, were endeavouring to restore their mistress to life, the malignant assassin casting a look of gratified hatred on the pale and bleeding victim of his frenzy, walked deliberately to the court before the house,

and remounting his horse, set out for Cadiz, with a velocity which would have rendered pursuit fruitless.

When Catherina was restored to her senses, she dispatched a servant for a surgeon, and hastily bound up her husband's wounds. Fernandez felt that he was deeply and dangerously wounded, but he was not without hopes that he should survive the assault. He endeavoured, as far as he was able, to console his wife, and she concealed the anguish that agonized her heart, that he might be undisturbed.

The

The arrival of a surgeon afforded some comfort; but the dreadful interval of suspense, while he prepared to probe the wound, overwhelmed her with horror. She was unable to stay in the apartment during the operation, and when the result was communicated, her hope for ever fled. The wound of Fernandez was mortal! * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

When the awful moment approached which was to dissolve the ties of a union which had long been productive of the purest felicity to Fernandez and Catherina, he entreated her to admit their son to

share his last embrace. The boy was brought into the room by a weeping domestic—his father raised himself a little to receive him, but the countenance of that affectionate parent was so deeply shaded with a ghastly paleness that the child did not know him. The sound of his voice, however, was familiar to the infant's ear, he held forth his little arms, and was received into the embrace of that father who was soon to sink into the embraces of the tomb. "Heaven bless my boy!" feebly articulated the dying man, "may the father of the fatherless be thy protector, my child, and make thee a con-

consolation and a blessing to thy mother—take him away,"—said he, in a feeble voice. Catherina received the pledge of their once happy love, and giving the child to an attendant, she turned to pay the last duties to an expiring husband.

The eyes of Fernandez were almost fixed, yet still they effused the mild lustre of love, as he gazed on the face of his wife. "Adieu, my love!" said he, in a voice scarcely articulate, "may that Providence which has hitherto been thy protector, continue to preserve thy virtue. Ah! my Catherina, it is an awful thing to die, and leave thee and Fre-

deric. Accept my last kiss, and close my eyes in peace!" Catherina bent over her beloved husband; she gently raised his head and placed it on her bosom—wiped the cold drops of death from his forehead—clasped him in a last embrace, and while she impressed the kiss of love on his pale lips, he sighed away his soul with a gentle expiration. * *

* * * * * * * * * *

Such was the tragic death of Fernandez Gaston, and such the fatal consequences of a criminal and ungratified passion.

Intelligence of the mournful event soon reached Cadiz, and the officers

officers of justice were dispatched in quest of Carlos. In a few days he was discovered in his concealment, at the country seat of a confidential friend, and he was instantly put in irons and imprisoned in the dungeon among the most atrocious criminals.

Meanwhile, the remains of Fernandez were interred in the village church-yard. A tombstone, inscribed with his name, was placed at his head, and his grave was daily visited by that affectionate widow, whose beauty had been the cause of his untimely death. Every morning did the fair mourner pay this

tribute to his memory, nor did she, in a single instance, omit this customary visit, till summoned to Cadiz to appear as a witness against his murderer.

This singular trial took place while Mr. Sotheran was in Cadiz, and though the court was uncommonly crowded, he obtained admission with the aid of a piece of gold.

Many of the principal inhabitants attended at this interesting trial, and a number of young ladies, in the bloom of beauty, adorned the benches, with an effulgence of female

female charms that seemed almost to justify the act of the unhappy criminal, when under the influence of similar attractions.

But justice was not to be diverted from the straight path of equity by a smile or a glance. Carlos was arraigned at the tribunal of his country, and, notwithstanding the endeavours of the harpies of the law to disconcert the evidence, the proofs of his guilt were sufficiently clear.

On this occasion, Catherina appeared, for the first time, in a court of justice. The propriety of her de-

demeanour, her sable garb, the paleness of her countenance, still beautiful, even in affliction, and the simple, yet forcible power of truth, though uttered in a low voice, and with the hesitation of grief and modesty, convinced the hearers of the guilt of the assassin. Carlos was condemned to die—and the address of his Judge to the unhappy criminal, probably was a warning to many other young gentlemen of violent passions, who were part of his auditory.

"It is with great concern," said the Judge, "that I am compelled by my office to denounce the sentence

tence of death on Carlos Vandamor this day. Few instances of criminality have been attended with such reiterated circumstances of outrage as this, and it must be afflictive to every reflecting mind to discover, that in the present state of civilization, any man could be found in Europe who could perpetrate a crime of such enormity.

"Among the wandering Arabs of the deserts of Africa, where men are as lawless and ferocious as the wild beasts that surround them, such a crime might appear somewhat excusable; yet even amongst those fugitive and barbarous hordes, the

the laws of hospitality are respected. Shall it then be believed that an European Merchant, a man nursed in the lap of refinement, and blest with the gifts of opulence, could basely invade the happiness of his neighbour, and endeavour to violate the honour of a chaste matron?

"Shall any man presume to vindicate adultery and assassination, under the plausible pretext of ungovernable passion? Whoever has so far perverted his reason, must this day be convinced that the man who is criminal is also punishable; that the assassin who invades the sacred home of another, and kills,

because

because he hates; forfeits his life to the laws of his country, and must suffer the pains and penalties of violated Justice for the preservation of society. This day, my friends, you have an awful example of the miseries of vice before your eyes, and to-morrow you may behold the sad spectacle of a young man, who with the fairest prospect of an honourable progress through life, has, by the impetuosity of his unrestrained passions, subjected himself to the ignominy of a public execution."

The unfortunate Carlos was put to death on the following day in the

the public square, and amongst the multitude of spectators Kelly was present, who gave a circumstantial account of that spectacle to his master, adding, "If Carlos had a hundred lives he deserved to forfeit them all for his unjustifiable cruelty to the innocent Fernandez and his wife."

From Cadiz Mr. Sotheran proceeded through a fertile country to Madrid, the capital of Spain, and by a comparison of the manners of the inhabitants with the people of London, he was able to come to a decision in favour of his countrymen.

In

In Madrid there was an inconsistent and heterogeneous intermixture of religion and licentiousness, very disgusting to the real moralist. Priestcraft cherished the vices of the opulent for gain, but instead of the reserve and jealousy described in Spanish Romances, Mr. Sotheran, found the people gay and hospitable.

During his residence in the Spanish capital, Mr. Sotheran amused himself with frequent excursions for the purpose of surveying the public buildings, and making observations on whatever was curious

curious or interesting to the traveller.

Madrid is situated on a plain surrounded by mountains. The houses are of brick, and the principal streets are broad, well paved and lighted, and adorned with fountains. The principal public building is the royal palace. Two magnificent bridges built over the little river Manzanares, contribute to the beauty of the city; and its numerous towers and spires impress the beholder with the idea of metropolitan grandeur.

Many

Many of the principal houses appear like prisons, in consequence of the windows being secured by iron gratings.

At the Prado, Mr. Sotheran had an opportunity of observing the citizens as they mingled indiscriminately. He observed that the men in general were tall, slender, and swarthy; the women beautiful, but mostly pale. In manners they were witty and vivacious, temperate in food, yet unrestrained in the indulgence of their propensity to intrigue.

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Sotheran travels to Petersburg—Anecdotes of Russian gallantry—A man banished to Siberia for fidelity to his wife.

THE long absence of Mr. Sotheran, from England, and the motives which induced him first to leave it, gradually estranged him from his native country; and having made observations on men and manners in France, Italy, and Spain, he came to a resolution to visit

visit the Russian capital; a place little known to Englishmen, except those that are engaged in the pursuits of commerce.

Attended by his confidential servant Kelly, he embarked from Malaga in a vessel freighted for St. Petersburgh, and arrived in that city in the beginning of June, 1709.

The appearance of this city and its inhabitants was much superior to Mr. Sotheran's expectation; and he could not without admiration reflect on the genius of Peter the Great, whose persevering wisdom

dom succeeded in reducing a nation of Barbarians to civilization.

But the disparity of the different classes of citizens, was offensive to a lover of liberty, and Mr. Sotheran beheld with commisseration the abject state of vassalage to which the laborious class were reduced, while the lordly burghers and their families appeared in the streets with the equipage and the retinue of princely magnificence. The cold and repulsive haughtiness of the Russian nobility, was offensive to the independent mind of Sotheran; but he was admitted to all

all the pleasures of social intercourse by the English merchants resident in St. Petersburg, who also introduced him to several Russian merchants.

Soon after his arrival he was cautioned by an Englishman against the intriguing disposition of the Russian ladies of rank. "You will probably excite the curiosity of some Russian dame," said his friend, "as you so often appear in the public walks; an assignation will be proposed, but beware of the consequences." "What," replied Sotheran with a smile, "are the ladies of Russia then so amor-

ous, I should have expected that this northern region was the abode of chastity." "Quite the reverse. The notorious incontinence of a certain lady, has communicated the contagion of licentiousness to the Court of Russia, and the most atrocious cruelties are sometimes exercised on the unhappy victims of illicit passion, for it cannot be called love which delights in the misery of its object. You run no great risk, however, of suffering the inflictions of unrequited or capricious passion; for like myself you are not remarkable for comeliness; but at present it is

dangerous

dangerous for a handsome man to reside in this capital.

" It is not yet seven years since Alexovitz Zarman, a Russian merchant was banished to the dreary desart of Siberia. His crime was conjugal fidelity—he loved Iowna and was beloved by that amiable and accomplished young lady. Their nuptials were solemnized in the great Church, and several persons of rank, either from curiosity, or some worse motive, were present at the ceremony in disguise.

"In the evening of his wedding-day Alexovitz received a letter enjoining him to go to a certain house in the rear of the imperial gardens, in the space of one hour. The unhappy bridegroom instantly went to his Iowna and shewed her the letter. They both dreaded the consequences of the assignation. To fly would be in vain. Despotic power admitted of no alternative or appeal. The victim of intrigue must either become criminal or perish, and he resolved on the latter as more honourable and glorious.

To

"To a man of depraved habits this incident would have appeared trifling, nay, pleasing, but Alexovitz was a character in whose bosom all the social virtues had hitherto shed their benignant influence. He was a lover mutually beloved by a beautiful woman—He was a bridegroom just united to an amiable and blushing consort. The first raptures of connubial felicity, throbbed in his breast with a degree of painful pleasure; and he stood on the summit of amorous expectation when the fatal billet arrived. A few lines scrawled by the hand of a female demon in a moment overwhelmed him

and his beauteous bride in misery. Their accents, harmonized by love, and their sighs, the overflowing of the softest emotions, were now no more. The wailings of anguish and the groans of despair succeeded, and Alexovitz impressed his Iowna's lips with the parting kiss of love.

"He went to the place appointed, where a female in a mask waited to receive him. It was now night, and he was conducted through the dark alleys of the gardens into a magnificent apartment. Here his guide left him, and in a few minutes the cause

of

of all his sorrow appeared before him with her cheeks stained with *rouge*, and eyes sparkling with desire.

" She appeared in a state of inebriation and advanced to embrace Alexovitz; but he shrunk from her arms with horror, and falling on his knees remained silent. Supposing his coldness and submissive attitude to originate in awe of superior rank, she addressed him with a smile, saying, " Arise young man, you are this night destined to higher honours than to fill the arms of a plebeian; I shall personate your bride."

"Madam," replied the generous Alexovitz rising, while a blush of virtuous indignation flushed over his animated countenance, "I was this day united to a woman who has long been the object of my fondest regard; no power on earth shall compel me to violate my engagement to Iowna, and I only request your permission to return to the society of the only lady whom I ever loved or ever can love."

While Alexovitz continued speaking, the countenance of his destroyer changed from the smile of ebriety and wantonness, to the frenzy

frenzy of malignant passion.—She rung a bell, a female attended, and was commanded to conduct the unfortunate young man to prison.

"In a moment he found himself surrounded by armed men, who hurried him to a dungeon belonging to the palace, the dreadful receptacle of others, who like himself had the temerity or fortitude to resist the unjust mandate of a tyrant.

"After languishing a week in solitary confinement Alexovitz was taken from prison, and sent with

several other state prisoners in perpetual exile to Siberia. Before his departure from the capital, a friend of his, who found means to gain admission, informed him that his noble minded bride had resolved to accompany him in his banishment in disguise; that she had secreted much treasure which might eventually contribute to their comfort; and that even the frigid and barren regions of Siberia would appear a paradise to her when warmed by the celestial beams of true love.

"True to her determination Iowna contrived to pass for a person

condemned to exile. She had disguised herself so completely by the discoloration of her natural fine complexion, that even Alexovitz did not recognize her; but the first sound of her voice convinced him of the presence of his faithful spouse.

"After a fatiguing journey through desert districts, the exile arrived at the place of their destination; where excepting the rigour of the inhospitable climate, Alexovitz did not regret the change, for even the wintry prospects of Siberia were brightened by the smiles of his lovely Iowna.

"Their secret intercourse was followed by the pregnancy of Iowna, and when the moment of parturition arrived her delicate constitution could not sustain the rigour of a Siberian winter. She expired in the arms of her unhappy Alexovitz, and their sad story excited the compassion of even the governor of the fort, who had long been accustomed to witness the sorrows of exiles with indifference.

"The dissolution of Iowna and her infant was death to the hopes and enjoyments of Alexovitz. He languished

languished in all the anguish of incurable grief till a gradual decline re-united him to the only object of his love."

CHAP-

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Sotheran proceeds to Moscow—Curious Adventures of Romanzow.

IN less than a month after his arrival at Petersburgh, Mr. Sotheran prepared for a journey into Tartary, and purposed afterwards to travel through Circassia and thence to Turkey.

Accordingly he procured the requisite passports for himself and his servant, and attended by a guard of Cossaks and a guide, he departed from the Russian capital.

After

After a tedious journey through roads almost impassable, he came in sight of Moscow, once the seat of the Russian government, and still celebrated for its extent, population, and commerce. But whatever charms it might possess in the estimation of a native, to Mr. Sotheran this celebrated city appeared an irregular, dirty place, and the uncouth manners of the inhabitants were still more disgusting to a man who had been accustomed to the refinement of London and Paris. By exhibiting a new view of man, however, even Moscow had some claims to the attention of the traveller.

In

In this city the manners of the Russians and Tartars, in some degree assimilate, particularly those of the Cossacks, who ramble in hordes on the banks of the Don and the Volga, and who often come to Moscow to sell their cattle.

As Mr. Sötheran received an introductory letter from an English merchant at Petersburgh to another in Moscow, he was admitted to all the benefits of social intercourse, not only with his countrymen but several Russian traders.

Amongst others he was introduced to Paul Romanzow, who was just

just returned from a journey overland to Persia and Kashmire. Like most travellers, Romanzow was communicative, and not a little vain of his attainments, and as he was possessed of a facility of seizing every interesting incident that occurred during his peregrinations, his conversation was amusing.

Romanzow invited Mr. Sotheran and his friend to spend a few days with him at his country seat, situated at the distance of two leagues from the city, on a romantic spot, near the banks of the Volga.

The

The Russian received his English visitors with cordial hospitality; whatever could gratify the palate appeared on his luxurious board; the furniture of the apartments was superb, the servants well-dressed, and Mrs. Romanzow herself attired in a style of magnificence. The richest silks of Persia formed her robe; a shawl of the most vivid dyes of Kashmire flowed over her shoulders, and several costly diamonds bespangled her snowy turban. Her person was tall and elegant, and her countenance expressive of good nature.

After

After dinner Romanzow regaled his guests with the richest wines of Persia, and his lady amused them with a Persian love-song. When she ceased, and her visitors expressed their admiration of her vocal powers, which were truly enchanting, Romanzow said with a smile, "That song, my friends, is one of the most celebrated amatory effusions of Hafez, the celebrated Persian bard; I wish he had never written it, for it cost me my heart." "O you know, Sir," replied Sotheran, "that one of our popular English poets says, 'The power of music all our hearts allow,' and the animated raptures of the poet, when

when chaunted by a lovely woman, must ever subjugate the heart of man."

As the conversation was in French, Mrs. Romanzow sometimes said a few words, but her imperfect knowledge of that language rendered her efforts to please irksome to herself, and she was content to continue rather a hearer than a speaker—an instance of praiseworthy self-denial in a lady.

Her husband supplied every deficiency of her colloquial powers, and indulged himself in

"The

"The full free converse of the friendly heart,
Improving and improved."

His cheerfulness was at once amiable and entertaining; and in the course of the afternoon he favoured his visitors with a narrative of his travels in the East; Mrs. Romanzow had often heard his adventures repeated, she therefore retired to give directions to her servants.

"You are both travellers, gentlemen," said Romanzow, "and will probably condescend to favour us with an account of your peregrinations; I have seen a little of the world myself, and as my journies have been principally in a country with

with which you are probably unacquainted, a short account of my adventures may prove amusing." The visitors expressed their wish to hear his narrative and he continued.

"When I arrived at the age of manhood, I was sent by my father to purchase silks in Persia. The Caravan to which I belonged, consisted of about two hundred individuals, well-mounted and armed. Fifty of the number were merchants of Moscow and Petersburgh; the remainder were Cossack servants, selected for their activity, martial skill, and intrepidity. During our march

through the extensive barren districts of Tartary we were infested by parties of the wandering Kalmucks, but they never ventured to attack us in front, but continued to harrass our rear.

"At length we arrived in the pleasant regions of Persia, so often celebrated by the Oriental poets. Here we found a happy, industrious, hospitable, and beautiful race of human beings, and I was so much delighted with the mildness of the clime, the rich productions of the soil, and the inoffensive manners of the amiable inhabitants, that I was tempted to forego my native country,

try, and fix in Persia as my future place of abode. But the ties of honour, as well as filial affection, bound me to return to Moscow. The property with which I was entrusted belonged to my father, to him I was therefore accountable. Under this impression I purchased a variety of the manufactures of the Persian looms, and returned home, after a prosperous journey.

"For some years I annually travelled to the East, and during my fourth visit, I became enamoured of Zeffia, my present spouse. She was the daughter of Vraster, a Persian chieftain, and my temerity in aspiring

piring to her love, had nearly cost me my life.

" The first time I saw Zelia was in a small arbour, in her father's garden. I was attracted to the entrance of an enclosure of myrtle by the harmony of vocal and instrumental music. I listened with rapture to the dulcit sounds, and seeing a small wicket stand open I entered the garden, and presented myself before the lady, who was playing on her guitar. She paused on my approach. I apologized for the intrusion, and she seemed satisfied with my apology. ' Fair creature,' said I, in a respectful tone, " pardon

the temerity of a mortal, who has presumed to enter this paradise of love, uninvited;—yes, charming being, this spot is indeed the residence of the loves and the graces. The air is filled with odoriferous scents, and mellifluent harmony; flowers and fruits appear in the most inviting forms and hues; and woman, the most enchanting object in the world, by her presence gives dignity and animation to the scene.'

"Stranger,' replied the lady, with a smile, "you are some wholesale dealer in flattery; praise is ever grateful to the human ear, but the eulogium bestowed on this garden

and

and its owner is too high, and savours more of poetic rapture, than simple undisguised sincerity."—— "Then this paradise is yours?"— "Yes, this garden was presented to me by my father yesterday, which was my birth-day." "Ah! could you admit a partner in your retirement, lovely lady, I should consider this charming spot Eden realized. Let me personate Adam and you shall represent Eve."— "Stranger, you are precipitate; my frankness has, I see, emboldened you to forget the respect due to female delicacy; and no man shall ever be admitted into my favour who can for a moment forget that

he is the natural protector of woman." 'Pardon, lovely creature, the spontaneous effusions of a warm heart; you have misconceived my intention, if you imagined that I meant to insult your feelings; the language of admiration you have misconstrued into adulatory impertinence; but I am sincere. How shall I convince you of my admiration; my love! Yes, I feel the softest emotions of tenderness, while I gaze on that delightful countenance, the living image of perfect beauty; and while the sweetness that beams from your eyes encourages hope, I here avow myself your lover.'

"The

"The lady looked surprized at the declaration, but there was no appearance of displeasure in her serene aspect. I clasped her unresisting hand in mine, and urged my suit with so much success, that she acknowledged herself pleased with my attentions. "You have already had a sufficient proof of my candour," said she, "by the readiness with which I pardoned your intrusion. The incident of our meeting is romantic, and nothing affords so much gratification to the heart of a young woman as a romantic attachment. I acknowledge then, that your professions of regard, are rather pleasing than offensive; but

you have several obstacles to encounter, which might deter the hardiest lover. You have not, indeed, to scale the walls of an enchanted castle, nor fight a duel with a giant or sorcerer, but you have to contend against opulence, prejudice, and parental authority. You are a stranger: that is no objection with me, but it will prove one of the first magnitude with my father, who, tenacious of his dignity, will never consent to my union with a foreigner and a merchant. You have also a competitor to cope with, of no small importance——a Persian Prince. But he is old, and you are young; and I should prefer a peasant

in the bloom of life and health, to a chieftain in a state of infirmity and dotage. I should die of the vapours if doomed to the society of such a companion. My name is Zeflia; my father is the principal possessor of the surrounding country for some miles, and though merciful and generous, he would certainly cause you to be put to death if he discovered your intercourse with his daughter. Retire then, stranger, and be assured, that though our meeting was accidental, I feel a sentiment of regret at our separation."

"Let us never part, adorable Zeflia," said I, with fervour. "I am neither deterred by the rank of my rival, nor the authority of your father, and if you will consent to be mine, a fleet Tartarian charger shall bear you with the velocity of the wind, from this charming spot, where your liberty and happiness must be sacrificed, if you remain, to a less pleasant region indeed, but where the assiduities of an enamoured husband, shall, throughout life be devoted to your gratification."

"Zeflia smiled at my earnestness; then viewing me with a pensive

sive and penetrating glance, she silently held out her hand, in token of her consent.

"Thus, an engagement, which was to mar or establish my happiness, and that of a beautiful woman, was the work of a moment; but a moment is an age in the annals of love. Zeflia pointed out the difficulty of our intended elopement; for though she was indulged with unrestrained liberty during the day, she was securely lodged in an upper chamber every night. "Yonder is my father's house," said she, "you see those two small turrets that surmount the Eastern point.

My chamber is in the most distant of the two; and if you can contrive to scale the pallisadoes which environ the shrubbery, and ascend to my window, I shall commit myself to your protection. It is an act of imprudence, but necessity; I cannot consent to marry old age and infirmity; I like your vivacity; it is congenial with my own disposition, and I think people may be at once cheerful and innocent. But remember, Romanzow, that I confide in your honour; any act of perfidy would for ever excite my contempt and hatred; and I never before met a man, to whose generosity I would entrust my happiness."

"I as-

"I assured her of my honourable intentions; offered to solemnize our marriage secretly, before our elopement, and entreated her to soothe her apprehensions, by a reliance on my affection. 'True love, my charming Zeflia,' said I, embracing her, 'resembles the pelican; it would become a willing sacrifice to preserve its object. If any doubt of my zeal and sincerity should yet remain, name the test, however perilous, by which I can convince you of my fidelity, and I will prove myself worthy of your affection, or perish." 'I'm satisfied,' said she, gently pressing my hand. 'To-morrow night I shall place a taper

in my chamber-window as a guide. Do not fail to come,' continued she, turning pale with apprehension, 'the time is precious, and such another opportunity may never occur.—Adieu! Romanzow; quit this garden as secretly as possible.'

'I then retired, and on my return to my countrymen, I communicated to a confidential friend my intention of carrying off Zeflia. He laughed at the extravagant project. 'A merchant transformed into a moonstruck lover!' exclaimed he. 'For shame Romanzow, such freaks might become a school-boy; you must attend to your business, and leave

leave the pleasures, the pains, the follies, and adventures of love to others.'

"I assured my friend that it was my serious intention of carrying off the Persian lady. 'My business is accomplished, you know Torzinskaw; the goods are purchased and made up into bales; I shall confide in your friendship to convey them safe to Moscow. I shall be there long before you.'

"My friend readily agreed to transact this business for me, and I hastened to give directions to my servants to obey Torzinskaw's orders,

ders, as I was compelled to return home without delay. I selected one servant, on whose fidelity and courage I could rely, to accompany me in my flight from Persia, and told him of my projected elopement.

"On the following night, about nine o'clock, I approached the residence of Zeflia, attended by my faithful Cossack. We brought two ladders, one of rope and another of wood. The taper of love was lighted in the turret, and I approached the court with a throbbing heart.

"With

"With the aid of Petrow I scaled the pallisadoes, and placing my wooden ladder against the wall I mounted with alacrity.

"Just as I reached the bottom of the lattice, the ladder broke, and I luckily seized the lower part of the window with my hands or I must have inevitably fallen on the pavement. The noise which the ladder made in falling alarmed the servants, who hastened with lights into the court; but at the same moment I got into the window, with the assistance of Zeflia.

"She

"She was terrified at the accident. 'Alas!' cried she, 'we are lost! my father will certainly search this chamber, and as there is no place of concealment you must be discovered and slain!' I calmed her apprehensions by proposing to hide myself on the roof. 'Haste then,' exclaimed the lady, 'I hear the sound of footsteps, my father is certainly coming.

"I easily ascended the flat roof from the window, and was scarcely secure, before I heard the Persian enter, and enquire whether his daughter had heard any noise?—'Nothing but the voices of the ser-

servants in the court-yard below.' 'What are you reading?' 'The Poems of Hafez.' 'Aye, you girls will always be poring over the verses of that amorous bard; give me a kiss, and go to repose; I think I shall take a walk on the roof this calm night.'

"I was electrified with terror, particularly when I heard the Persian unlock a small door and beheld him ascend with a light in his hand. While I stood at the extremity of the roof doubtful whether I should be compelled to precipitate him or myself from the top of the house, he slowly approached the spot where I stood,

stood, behind a small angle of the turret. He came to the place—I expected to be seized, and scarcely breathed, when on his coming to the angle, a sudden puff of wind extinguished his taper. To what trifling circumstances we are sometimes indebted for our preservation! I secretly blessed the friendly blast, and called it the breeze of Venus. The surly Persian cursed it, and the rising moon which presented her beauteous crescent in the south-east, engaged his attention. After viewing the mild luminary for a few moments he descended, and when I found that all was silent in the house I again entered the window.

"Zeflia

"Zeflia received me with smiles, and my Cossack, who had secreted himself near the house, and watched all my movements, now came to assist us in our descent on the rope-ladder. We came down in safety, and pursuing a path which led to our lodging, my Cossack prepared three horses, on one of which we placed Zeflia, who had been taught to ride, and mounting the others, we set out well armed for Moscow.

"About sun-rise we came in sight of a small town, and as Zeflia was disguised in a Cossack's cloak, we passed through undiscovered. We did not venture, however, to stop

stop till we came to a woody plain two leagues beyond the town, when my fair fellow traveller being very much fatigued, we halted on the bank of a rivulet, to refresh ourselves and our horses.

"After resting an hour we pursued our journey, and in the evening we rode up to a small house which we observed on a hill. The proprietor received us with hospitality; a supper of rice and milk afforded us a light and nourishing meal, and we retired at an early hour to rest in the only apartments which our kind host appropriated to strangers.

"Our

"Our bedding consisted of carpets, and Zeflia, wrapping herself up in her cloak, committed herself to the embraces of sleep with a confidence in my honour, which inspired my heart with admiration. My trusty Cossack and myself lay down on the floor near the entrance of her apartment with our arms near us, and a sound sleep reinvigorated and prepared us for the trials of the following day.

"Next morning my lovely fugitive awoke with a smile of cheerfulness, and we proceeded without delay. Zeflia endured the hardships of a tedious journey without repining.

I knew that young women acted with great fortitude in love adventures, but I did not think it possible for one of the sex to pursue a fatiguing journey with such unrepining constancy.

"During our progress towards Moscow, we were exposed to many dangers, particularly from straggling parties of the Kalmucks. One of these, to the number of six men, well mounted and armed, pursued us for several miles on the sixth day of our journey; Zeflia was terrified, but I entreated her not to be alarmed, but confide in our protection.

"At

"At dusk the Kalmucks overtook us on the skirt of a wood; I desired Zeflia to retreat among the trees, and convinced of the bravery of my Cossack I prepared to receive the assailants. They came upon us sword in hand at a hard trot; but my companion as well as myself had been accustomed to shoot flying; our pistols were excellent, and we shot the two foremost of our opponents. The other four undeterred by this circumstance attacked us with such impetuosity, that it required our utmost skill and exertion to defend ourselves. I received two wounds, one in the head and another in my left

 shoulder,

shoulder, and my horse lost one of his ears. When the animal was wounded he became almost unmanageable, and rushed with me into a thicket, whither I was hotly pursued by two of the Kalmucks, who probably considered me an easy prey. But the curvetting of my horse prevented them from striking me, and at the same time I made a desperate effort for their destruction, and throwing the reins on the horse's neck, I took my remaining pistol from the holster and shot one of my adversaries just as he aimed a blow with his sword at my breast; the next moment I received my

remaining

remaining opponent on the point of my sword; he was wounded and evidently disconcerted. Casting a glance on his two companions who were engaged with my Cossack, and finding them also unsuccessful, he turned his horse's head and scampered away. His two surviving companions followed his example, leaving us victors indeed, but in a most perilous situation, being both wounded, no habitation near, nor any medical assistance to be procured.

"During the conflict Zenia continued in concealment, and her emotions may be better imagined

than described. I hastened to remove her apprehensions, but she sunk from her horse on beholding me covered with blood. I alighted, and by assuring her that neither of my wounds were dangerous, in some degree succeeded in restoring her usual chearfulness.

"She now officiated as my surgeon, and bound up my wounds with linen. As for my Cossack, he had been accustomed to similar skirmishes, and being an expert swordsman he defended himself so successfully that he had only received a slight flesh wound, which he humourously called a scratch.

scratch. I felt an emotion of the deepest concern on beholding three fellow creatures dead at our feet, and although they were the aggressors, I shall ever regret having slain a human being. My Cossack felt no such qualms, but having assisted Zeflia to remount, he sprang into his saddle, and casting a look on the dead Kalmucks he exclaimed, "Good night, gentlemen!" and rode off humming a Persian song. Such is the force of education and habit.

"We travelled slowly during the remainder of the night, not without the danger of losing our way.

Aided by the friendly light of the moon I consulted my pocket compass, which enabled us to keep nearly in the direct road to Moscow, and on the following morning, soon after sunrise, we came in sight of an encampment on the banks of a river.

"Zeflia was terrified, and I was not without some apprehensions, for the Kalmucks, whose wandering hordes pass through these districts, are a vindictive and relentless race, and if the survivors of the party which had attacked us had returned to this camp, we must inevitably be sacrificed to the

the resentment of the tribe. Our fears were only momentary, for my Cossack viewing them through his glass exclaimed, "Bravo! there are my friends; I see the Cossack standard flying over the Hettman's tent; let us approach them and partake of their cheer." Indeed we had no alternative left, for the centinels had observed us, and a troop came on the spur to conduct us to the camp, where we were received as friends.

"The Hettman himself, when he found that I was a Russian merchant, ordered me to be brought before him, and interrogated me on

my motives for travelling with so small a guard through a country so dangerous. I gave him a short history of my love adventure, at which he laughed heartily, and holding forth his hand, he assured me of his protection. "You shall have a sufficient guard, Romanzow," said he, "to attend you to the next encampment of Cossacks, which which is about twenty leagues distant, and I shall give orders to the commanding officer of the party to see that you have a proper escort from that camp to the city of Moscow. In the mean time, you had better continue here a week at least, for travelling in your present state

state might bring on a fever." I thanked the generous Hettman and accepted his invitation. Zeflia was also introduced to his highness, and treated by him with a degree of urbanity which would have done honour to the most polite sovereign.

"A tent was prepared for the reception of my destined bride, and she was attended by six young women. Another tent was prepared for me, with a guard of honour, but I required no attendant except my own servant, who was much esteemed by the Hettman for his bravery in my defence.

"He behaved like a true Cossack," said the chief; "present him this sabre from me, and tell him it is the gift of his prince." My servant received this honorary present with all the pride and exultation of a young warrior; he wrapped it up with the greatest care, and placed it among our luggage, and declared he would never part with it till death.

"During our abode for a week in the camp of the Cossacks, Zeflia completely recovered from her recent fatigue; she now considered herself as my consort, and accompanied me in my rambles in the vicinity

vicinity of the encampment. As she was dressed in the Persian habit, which is very different and more splendid than that of the Tartars, her appearance excited the curiosity of the women belonging to the horde; nor was she less gratified with observing their manners and customs.

" The principal employment of the Cossacks is the tending of their flocks and herds, and the management and feeding of their horses, which they considered as their chief riches. Their amusements are chiefly martial; and though not remarkable for exact-

ness of discipline, they are excellent horsemen, and expert in the use of the sabre and the spear. When they remove their encampment their wives and children accompany the army, and are carried in long-bodied vehicles drawn by oxen. Hence, wherever they go, all the comforts of social and domestic life attend them in their wanderings over the extensive tracts of their native country.

"With respect to learning and scientific skill, they are grossly ignorant, and still more obscure in their ideas of religion. Their worship seems to consist of a multitude

multitude of absurd and unmeaning ceremonies, performed by their priests with a dexterity which reminds the observer of legerdemain. The tinkling of small bells; the exhibition of deformed idols on their altars; constitute the principal requisites of their idolatrous worship. Some of the tribes, indeed, profess Christianity; but it is deformed with dark and mysterious mummery, similar to what may have been practised in the civilized nations of Europe in the days of monkish superstition. From such a people there is little purity of morals to be expected; yet they possess some of the virtues

of the savage, particularly a respect for the laws of hospitality. Yet notwithstanding their professions of kindness to strangers, they will thieve if they can without detection, and Zeflia more than once observed one of her female attendants in the Cossack camp endeavouring to open the coffer which contained her jewels.—I forgot to mention before, that my dear Persian had provided herself with all her jewels, consisting of some of the most beautiful and precious gems of the East.

"Before my departure I presented the Hettman with a diamond of the

the first water; I could perceive that the present was very acceptable, and the generous prince ordered one of the fleetest chargers in his stud to be given to me instead of my one-eared horse. I parted with my old fellow-traveller with some regret; he had carried me over a vast space, and was not the less valuable in my estimation for having lost an ear in my service. But I was now among a warlike race, who considered military pomp indispensible, and I was necessitated from motives of prudence, to adopt their manners, in order to obtain their respect and conciliate their attention.

" Before

"Before I set out the Hettman presented me with a passport for Zeflia, myself, and my servant; and with a cordial squeeze of the hand, he bade me adieu. I shall ever retain a grateful remembrance of the kindness of this gentle savage.

"We proceeded without molestation to the next encampment, where another escort of Cossacks was ordered to attend me to the gates of Moscow. A pleasant journey in fine weather, at length brought me in view of the glittering spires of the city; my heart bounded with joy; and Zeflia was delighted with the

the idea that she should soon be in a place of security.

"In two hours we came to the entrance of the city, where I dismissed my escort, after rewarding them with a purse of roubles. I immediately conducted Zeflia to the house of a friend, and taking her jewels with me, I presented myself before my father.

"He was overjoyed at my safe return, and after the customary congratulations, he, like a man of business, made enquiries respecting my commercial success. 'I hope, Sir,' said I, with an air of gravity,

that you will have no reason to complain of my journey, for although I have not brought an assortment of the silken manufactures of the East, I have furnished myself with some of its costliest natural productions.'—'What!' cried my father, interrupting me, 'Have you not brought the expected assortment of silks?' 'Not I truly, Sir, but I can supply you with jewellery of no inconsiderable value.' With these words I opened the coffer, and taking out a variety of diamonds, pearls, and rubies, I placed them on the desk before him.'

"The

"The beauty and brilliancy of the gems, for a moment, engaged his attention. 'These are very beautiful toys, indeed,' said he, 'but I am not a jeweller; and these elegant articles will not prove a compensation to us for our failure in our usual business. Your whimsical crotchets, Romanzow, will probably be our ruin.'

"I could no longer trifle with the feelings of my father, but having apologized for my innocent deception, I proceeded to inform him of the real state of our affairs, and related the circumstances of the elopement of Zeflia. My father expos-

tulated with me on the imprudence and precipitation of my conduct. 'I know your integrity, my son,' said he; 'I need not, therefore, enjoin the honourable performance of your matrimonial engagement with this Persian lady, who, though her conduct has an appearance of levity, may be truly virtuous, and as such, truly respectable.' I defended the character of Zeflia to the satisfaction of my father, and afterwards, by his own desire, introduced her. He was charmed with the genuine frankness of her manners; and the day after our arrival in Moscow I was united to my fair Persian in the

presence

presence of several of my relations.

"We have now been married nearly six years; two sons and a daughter are the fruits of our union, and we live as happily as if our courtship had been regulated by all the laws of decorum.

"I have since travelled twice to Persia to purchase the manufactures of that country; but I always avoided the residence of Zeflia's father, lest he should revenge the elopement of his daughter by my death. The journey from which I recently returned, shall be my last

over

over the Tartarian regions; I have realized sufficient riches to establish my children in the world; nay, even the jewels of my wife would have been sufficient for that purpose, as they have been valued by a skilful lapidary to be worth forty thousand roubles."

Here

Here Mr. Romanow concluded his narrative, and received the thanks of his visitors, who, in turn, recounted the principal incidents of their lives.

While Mr. Sotheran continued at the country seat of his Russian friend, the utmost attention of his host was devoted to his gratification. A variety of amusements, peculiar to the country, were exhibited, particularly the military evolutions of the Cossacks, and Mr. Sotheran was surprized at their skill in horsemanship, and the dexterity with which they wielded their arms.

Another

Another amusement, of a gentler kind, consisted of a Persian play, in which the performers were all attired in the Eastern costume. This entertainment consisted chiefly of the musical recitation of select pieces from the Persian Poets, and supported by the different performers with characteristic gestures.

As the weather was very fine, Mr. Romanzow contrived to render the exhibition still more pleasing by decorating the saloon with a variety of flowering shrubs and evergreens, over which, a number of lamps diffused a most agree-

agreeable lustre. The entertainment concluded with a dance by two Persian girls, who displayed all the graces of agility and motion, regulated by harmonious sounds.

CHAP-

CHAPTER IV.

A journey to Circassia—description of the inhabitants.

At the delightful villa of Paul Romanzow, Mr. Sotheran passed a week in that pleasing gratification of curiosity which accompanies an intimacy formed with amiable people, and at the expiration of that time he returned to Moscow, and prepared for his journey to Circassia.

Prior to his departure from Moscow he thought it expedient to engage

engage a guide to accompany him through the vast tracts over which he intended to pass; he wrote a polite letter to his Russian friend, requesting his assistance on this occasion, and next morning Mr. Romanzow favoured him with a visit. He was attended by Michaelof, that faithful Cossack, who had shared all his dangers, and whose services he came to offer to his English friend.

"You might easily engage a guide," said Mr. Romanzow, "but in many instances they are negligent, indolent, or treacherous; the tried fidelity of Michaelof is his

best recommendation, and he has consented, though with much reluctance, to conduct you to Circassia. His intimate acquaintance with the various dialects spoken by the Tartar tribes, will render him particularly useful, and I can vouch for his honesty and courage."

Mr. Sotheran was charmed by this fresh instance of Mr. Romanzow's attention, and gladly accepted the brave Cossack as his conductor.

When Mr. Romanzow bade adieu to his English friend, he turned with some emotion to where Michaelof

stood in a pensive attitude.—— "Farewell!" said he, "I now entrust the personal safety of my friend to your care, Michaelof; be to him as you have been to me, a faithful servant. When you have attended him to the limits where your services can be most useful, you may, if you please, return to Moscow, where you shall ever be received by me not only as a man of worth, but an old friend. Accept this token of my esteem, and be faithful to Mr. Sotheran." With these words, he presented the Cossack with a purse of gold, and with a cordial shake of the hand, parted. The eyes of the fierce Cossack were

moistened with tears, and the big drops rolled down his cheeks, while he articulated in a querulous voice, "Adieu, Romanzow; adieu, my friend! may Heaven bless and protect you! I hope I shall again return and die in your service."

This proof of the sensibility and grateful attachment of Michaelof to his former master, convinced Mr. Sotheran of his worth, and with two such attendants as the Cossack and Kelly, he considered himself as secure as it was possible for a traveller to be.

The

The approach of winter hastened the departure of Mr. Sotheran from Moscow. He set out in October, with his two attendants, well armed. Their baggage consisted of a small tent and matrass, and a portmanteau containing Mr. Sotheran's linen. Kelly, who acted as his master's treasurer, was encumbered with one thousand roubles, and the Cossack had the charge of the camp equipage.

Our travellers proceeded over vast uncultivated tracts, till they came in view of the lofty Caucasus. During their journey they had met with several parties of the wander-

ing Tartars, who supplied them with provisions, and Michaelof congratulated his master on the prospect of their speedy arrival in Circassia. "This is a dangerous district," said he, "as the Circassians are often infested by the Daghestan Tartars, who, on the slightest pretext make inroads, and carry devastation into the villages. When we arrive at the foot of the Caucasus we shall be safe."

Proceeding over a hill, the travellers came in sight of the first Circassian village, and on their approach beheld the inhabitants flying in different directions. A banditti of

of the lawless Tartars were pillaging it, and the women and children fled from their fury with looks of consternation. The men, however, resolved to defend their village, and attacked the marauders, who were dispersed for the purpose of plunder. At first the villagers were successful, but the superiority of the Tartars, in number and discipline, when they collected, rendered the contest doubtful.

Thus precipitated, as it were, into an unexpected conflict, Mr. Sotheran and his servants resolved to abide the issue of the fray, and if possible,

contribute to the preservation of the village.

Both Kelly and Michaelof were brave in the extreme, and Mr. Sotheran himself, was by no means deficient in personal courage. They were well armed with loaded pistols and sabres, and in all respects prepared for either offensive or defensive operations.

Obedient, therefore, to the dictates of justice, they advanced sabre in hand, and joining the Circassians, they encouraged them to repel the invaders. Michaelof and Kelly attacked the van of the Tartars

tars with such fury and effect, that in a few minutes the spot was strewed with mangled bodies. The Circassians by a prompt co-operation with their generous assistants, succeeded in the repulsion of the enemy, and the Tartars retired from the scene of action, leaving above half their troops killed and wounded.

The villagers crowded round the strangers, who had arrived at such a critical moment, and expressed their gratitude with repeated shouts. Mr. Sotheran and his attendants were conducted to the principal hut, and regaled with

the best viands, and thus by a fortuitous incident, they were admitted to the confidence and friendship of the Circassians, on the first day of their arrival.

Mr. Sotheran was introduced by the old men of the village to the Usden, or prince, who governed the district, and was received with a familiarity which rather surprized him. On a closer examination of the manners of the Circassians, he discovered they were not an amiable people, nor did their country afford a secure residence. The low arts of thievery were practised even by their princes,

ces, nor was theft considered criminal, but rather a proof of superior ingenuity. In the art of war they were inferior to the neighbouring Tartars, who consequently made frequent and successful inroads among them, and they were so negligent of the means of self-defence, that the villages on their frontiers were as unfortified and defenceless as those of the interior.

This irrational negligence was the consequence of their public form of government, which was a kind of aristocracy, or rather oligarchy, in which a few in-

dividuals, distinguished by the title of Usden, exercised unlimited sway in their several districts. As crimes were comparatively few, the punishment of death was unknown among them, and it was only in the field of battle that men expired under the inflictions of a fellow creature. Naturally pacific and indolent, the Circassians aspired to no accession of territory, and it even required a degree of vigilance, which was not their characteristic, to enable them to preserve their country from depopulation in consequence of the frequent invasion of the Tartar banditti.

Their

Their employments were chiefly pastoral, and but a few were engaged in the pursuits of agriculture or manufactures. Silks of a coarse kind, and arms of an inferior quality, were manufactured, and the fabrication of bows, arrows, and darts, was general among them. But the more splendid productions of the Persian looms, were obtained by this people at a price the contemplation of which made Mr. Sotheran shudder. Young virgins were sold by their inhuman relations to supply the Harems of the East, particularly those of Turkey, and the high prices given for those beauteous victims of avarice,

avarice, enabled the Circassians to appear decorated in the most gorgeous apparel.

The women of Circassia, of whom Mr. Sotheran had heard so much, engaged his attention. A candid examination convinced him that they were inferior to his countrywomen in every respect. Several of the Circassian girls were indeed beautiful, but it was the beauty of a savage, not that enchanting combination of grace, modesty and sensibility, which gives such majestic dignity to the demeanour of Englishwomen. He looked in vain for the blushing

diffidence

diffidence of the maiden; an air of amorous gaiety characterized these unpolished females, whose acquirements consisted merely of skill in embroidery, agility and grace in dancing, and a proficiency in playing on the guitar, the flute and the tambourine.

A remarkable peculiarity in the person of the young female Circassian was the smallness of the waist, which being considered a beauty, the utmost care was taken from infancy to render that part of the form

"Fine by degrees, and beautifully less."

For

For this purpose a broad belt of thin leather was fastened round the waist till it burst, and afterwards another, till the compression was considered sufficient for ornament.

Several dealers in human merchandize, like the collectors of pictures in Europe, visit Circassia, and purchase the most beautiful young women for the Turks of Constantinople. Custom has reconciled the people to this traffic, but it is at once detrimental to the population, and pernicious to the morals of the Circassians.

Few

Few instances of the predominance of natural affection over avarice have occurred in this country, yet even here, heroic virtue, and true love, sometimes exert their ennobling influence. During Mr. Sotheran's travels through the charming regions of Circassia, he had an opportunity of witnessing the predominance of parental affection over the love of gain; but an instance of the imperishable excellence of virtuous love, excited his highest admiration and respect.

CHAP-

CHAPTER V.

Love in Disguise, or the Adventures of Zarman and Myrrha.

AT the foot of the vast and majestic Caucasus lived Raynorskoi, an Usden, who inherited a large possession. The peasantry for several miles around his dwelling were his vassals, and remarkable for comeliness, in which they excelled the inhabitants of the other Circassian districts. Myrrha, the daughter of a poor peasant, was considered by her neighbours as

as the most beautiful maid in the world; and several of them congratulated Orloff, her father, on the certainty of his obtaining immense wealth by the sale of his daughter. But the simple peasant replied with generous indignation, "No, I am indeed poor, but honest; I shall not deprive myself of the riches which heaven has sent me in the virtues of my dutiful daughter, and were she as fair as fancy could conceive, and crowns and sceptres offered to Orloff as her price, I will never sell my child!"

These

These sentiments were cherished by the peasant, as a part of his religious duty, and secretly venerated by those neighbours, who sacrificing their own feelings on the altar of gain, could not help admiring his superior virtue.

The fame of Myrrha's charms reached beyond the limits of her native village, and a purchaser was sent by a luxurious Mahometan to convey the fair victim to his repository of neglected females. But no price could prevail on Orloff to sell that daughter, who, with tearful eyes stood trembling beside him. She was mute,

mute, but her eloquent look of affection and sorrow pleaded strongly in her favour, and when the dealer in female beauty returned with evident marks of disappointment on his countenance, the father of Myrrha took her by the hand, exclaiming, "Dry up thy tears my child, I will never sell thee!"

But though the beauteous and innocent Myrrha was thus secured from prostitution, by the magnanimity of a father, another trial awaited her. The son of Raynorskov, while on a hunting party, had called at her native village. Myrrha

Myrrha and several other youthful females were dancing on the green before her father's door, when Zarman approached with his attendants. The dancers paused, but the young prince requested them to resume their amusement; they obeyed, and the attractive graces of Myrrha appeared irresistibly charming as she bounded with all the beauties of motion through the convolutions of the sprightly dance.

Zarman gazed with delight, his delight was succeeded by admiration, and admiration soon kindled into love. In one short hour

Myrrha

Myrrha beheld a prince among her admirers, but she shrunk from his proffered embrace with virgin timidity. Her lover unused to a repulse, repeated his assiduities, but a dignified repulsion again disconcerted him.

He then applied to Orloff, desiring him to exercise his authority over the will of this coy maiden. But Orloff could not interfere. He knew the rank of the suitor, and promptly expressed his sentiments. "I know Zarman," said he, "that I am your father's vassal; to him I am obedient, as far as it concerns myself, but I have no right to

to force the inclinations of Myrrha either for him or you. Her will is free, if you can obtain her hand by honourable means, I shall think myself ennobled by the alliance, but let neither fraud nor force be used to destroy the happiness of my child."

Zarman was at once surprized and pleased at the dignity and force of Orloff's sentiments, and from that hour he himself became the votary of virtue. He had from his infancy been remarkable for the goodness of his disposition, and love now converted his heart to justice and humanity. "If

Myrrha is to be mine," said he, "she shall be so only by her own consent; let me endeavour to become estimable to this lovely virgin by the only way in which I can successfully obtain her esteem."

Actuated by a pure affection, Zarman revisited the residence of Myrrha, and by his respectful deportment he gradually won her affection. He had now an opportunity, not only to behold the simple beauties of her form, but also to profit by the elevation of sentiment with which Heaven had inspired her angelic mind.

Myrrha was just sixteen, a period at which the female form attains its full perfection in the Eastern regions of the globe.—Her stature was dignified, though not tall, for the symmetry of her frame would have been a model for a painter or statuary. The feminine delicacy and grace of her limbs was enlivened with healthful vigour, which gave animation to every motion. Her countenance was the image of tenderness, sensibility, and goodness; her fine complexion, animated with the carnation of health, and brightened by the lustre of eyes beaming with benignity, im-

pressed the beholder with the idea of some superior being; and the propriety of her manners, regulated by modesty and sense, was the theme and the admiration of her neighbours. Her mind was indeed uninstructed in those rudiments of knowledge which invigorate the reason of happier European females; but Myrrha wanted only the light of instruction to become an ornament to the most polished society.

The impression made by such a combination of charms on the warm, youthful, and amorous heart of Zarman, was never to be

 effaced.

effaced. He pressed his suit with the ardour of a generous lover; but while the amiable Myrrha could not refuse her hand where her heart had consented, a malignant being in a moment destroyed the happiness of the lovers.

Raynorskoi was informed of the visits of his son to the daughter of Orloff, but at first he only smiled at what he considered a common amour. When he found, however, that his son intended to take the daughter of a peasant to his arms as a consort, his pride was rouzed; he interrogated Zarman,

who was too noble to conceal his attachment by an untruth, and who also refused to discontinue his visits to Myrrha. His father, who was well acquainted with the nobleness of his son's disposition, knew that menaces would prove ineffectual, he therefore disguised his resentment, but resolved to send Myrrha secretly out of the country.

Zarman was now induced by prudence to visit his mistress secretly, and he apprized her of his father's disapprobation of their attachment; but soothed her sor-

rowful apprehensions with vows of unchangeable fidelity.

One fine evening in spring the noble lover came privately to the dwelling of Myrrha. Her heart thrilled with joy on his approach, and they proceeded arm in arm along the bank of the rivulet which ran with a winding course behind her father's cottage.

The weather, the scenes, and the solitude of the place, were all propitious to the lovers. No sounds were to be heard but the music of the nightingale, the soft murmurs of the stream, and the

the still softer rustling of the foliage of the trees, agitated by the gentle undulations of the fragrant vernal air. A majestic grove of cedars, which grew on the bank of the brook, appeared with peculiar magnificence, while the moonshine adorned their tufted tops with pleasing light, and displayed that indistinct and visionary variety of light and shade, so delightful to the imagination of the nocturnal rambler. The minds of the lovers were too deeply engaged in the delicious interchange of the sweetest blandishments of tenderness, to pay any attention to the beauties

of nature which surrounded them, and they rambled till the solemn midnight hour reminded Zarman of the necessity of his return to a home where a morose father required his presence. The gentle and tender Myrrha, almost fainted away as her lover clasped her to his heart, with repeated promises that he would revisit her on the following evening. He little knew the distance which was to separate them in that short period; and with mingled sighs of tenderness and regret, he snatched the parting kiss and hastened away.

While

While these happy lovers were thus enjoying the inexpressible delight of a pure passion, the wily Raynorskoi selected six of his dependants, and commanded them to disguise themselves in the garb of the Daghestan Tartars, to go to the cottage of Orloff, and carry off his daughter, whom they were to sell to the first Turkish purchaser of female slaves they met with. The price of the innocent victim of tyranny was to be equally divided by the adventurers, and their master enjoined secrecy, as they valued their lives.

This banditti, so hostile to the happiness of Zarman, passed him about a league from the cottage, and proceeding with the celerity of bad men prompted by avarice, they arrived at the dwelling of Orloff, just as Myrrha, with her fancy filled with fond ideas of her lover, was sinking into a gentle slumber. The instruments of a tyrant's will hastily dismounted, broke into the unguarded residence of beauty and virtue, and compelled Myrrha to mount one of their horses, in despite of the expostulations and intreaties of the wretched father and daughter.

The

The party rode hard during the remainder of the night, and about day-break stopped to refresh themselves and their horses, but Myrrha would not consent to take any nourishment; her tears flowed incessantly, and a death-like paleness overspread that face which lately displayed the vermeil bloom of youth, health, and beauty.—She was obliged to travel with her inhuman guard till late in the afternoon, when they arrived at Abreda, a populous town, where several Turkish slave merchants were busily engaged in purchasing beautiful females.

Myrrha was offered for sale by her conductors, and sold at a high price to a Turk, who skilled in this traffic, could easily discover the native loveliness of his slave, though her countenance was obscured by grief and fatigue.

The news of his misfortune soon reached the ears of Zarman, whose grief and despair were inexpressible. He hastened to the cottage of Orloff, to learn the particulars of the disaster, and found that afflicted parent sitting on the ground overwhelmed with sorrow. Convinced by the description given

by

by Orloff of the banditti, that they were Daghestan Tartars. Zarman came to a determination to range the extensive tracts where that hostile tribe wandered at large, and by a severe retaliation revenge the injuries of his lost Myrrha.

Accordingly he summoned the most warlike of the Circassian youths to accompany him in his expedition. Two hundred courageous young men, well mounted and armed, obeyed the voice of their Prince, and with him shared all the perils and privations of an unproductive warfare.

During

During the summer they had frequent skirmishes with the Tartars, whom they defeated on every occasion, in consequence of their superiority of numbers, and the desperate intrepidity of Zarman, who fought with all the fury of an injured lover. He returned with above one half of his troops, covered with laurels, indeed, but in a state of mind bordering on despondency, for all enquiries respecting Myrrha had hitherto proved fruitless.

Soon after his return to Circassia, his health declined, to the regret of his father, who would now

now have willingly restored the fair Myrrha to his only son, had it been in his power. But the unhappy maid was beyond the reach of his influence, and he looked forward with apprehensions of the untimely death of his son and heir. The aid of the most skilful physicians were resorted to in vain; the disease of Zarman was love languishing for the loss of its object, and nothing but the restoration of that object could revive the powers of animation.

One of the six villains who had carried off Myrrha, was struck with

with remorse on beholding the woe-worn aspect of his Prince; he bitterly repented that he had been accessary to the misery of the man whom he had been taught to look up to as his future Sovereign, and resolved to communicate all he knew respecting the transaction.

When he disclosed the fatal secret, the heart of Zarman was agonized by conflicting passions: Indignation at the cruel treachery of a father, and resentment against the villains who had made merchandize of his inestimable Myrrha. Availing himself of the intelligence, he

he resolved to travel into Turkey, in disguise, and if possible recover his beloved mistress. He engaged Ismailow, a confidential servant, to accompany him in this enterprize; and being himself a skilful performer on the flute, while his servant excelled on the tambourine, he resolved that they should assume the character of itinerant musicians.

Little as Zaïman was acquainted with civilization, he thought it expedient to provide himself with a purse of gold, and equipped with two flutes, a dagger in his belt, and a sabre, he set out on his travels

travels, attended by his faithful and ingenious servant.

Convinced that the utmost pains would be taken by Raynorskoi, to discover the route of the fugitives, Zarman set out in the beginning of a dark night, and being well-mounted he travelled hard till sun rise. He then stopped on the outskirt of a wood, and after a proper refreshment continued his journey. In the afternoon, by the advice of Ismailow, he abandoned the horses, which were now quite tired, and began his pedestrian journey as a musician.

Where-

Wherever our adventurers found it requisite to stop for refreshment or repose, they exercised their musical skill, to the great delight of the young men and women, who danced to the sweet and sprightly notes of the Circassians. Their reception was always cordial and agreeable, and the villagers beheld their departure with regret. If Zarman's mind had been at ease, he would have received much pleasure from the cheerful hospitality with which he was treated; but the corrosive pangs of almost hopeless love, inflicted a degree of misery which scarcely admitted of any alleviation.

tion. The sprightliness of his fellow-traveller, indeed, afforded him some amusement, for Ismailow was not a lover, and the gaiety which he inspired by the enlivening sounds of his tambourine, was responded by the joy of his own heart. Thus did Zarman travel till he reached the gates of Constantinople.

On his arrival in the Ottoman capital he beheld the extent and magnificence of its mosques and palaces with admiration. But the dress of the women prevented him from seeing their faces when they appeared in public, and he

was

was almost ready to desist from his search in consequence. Still the vivacity of Ismailow cherished his hopes: being themselves Mahometans, they were permitted to range the city unmolested, and to exercise their musical skill, which they did with success, and received several presents from opulent merchants, into whose houses they were admitted.

But emolument was not the motive which induced Zarman to travel in disguise; his lovely Myrrha engaged his hopes and wishes, and he endeavoured to obtain admission into the Seraglio

raglio of the Grand Signior in vain.

When he appeared at the entrance of that magnificent prison of female beauty, he, together with his companion, endeavoured to soften the hearts of the military guard placed there, with music; but was repulsed with taunts and execrations. Nor was he more successful in his attempts to obtain admission into the Harems of the Grandees, who were as jealous as their imperial master.

Accident at length proved propitious

pitious to this romantic lover. At a caravansera, where a number of travellers met, Ismailow became acquainted with the very merchant who purchased Myrrha, and who was preparing for another journey into Circassia.

When he found that Ismailow was a native of that country, he made many enquiries respecting the young women, and the Circassian, by an interesting description of his country-women, at once amused the Turk, and obtained his confidence. "There are many lovely young women in my native village," said Ismailow, "but the most beautiful young

young girl we could boast of was last year conveyed away to Abruda, and sold to a Turkish merchant." "What was her name?"—"Myrrha, the daughter of a poor cottager, named Orloff." "I was the purchaser of that charming girl," said the Turk, "and I afterwards sold her for one thousand zechins, to Mustapha, a rich Grandee." "Then he must be some great officer of state, or he could not give so much treasure for a slave." "No," replied the Turk, "he lives in retirement at Permania, a small village twenty leagues from Constantinople, where his Harem is filled with the most beau-

beautiful women in the world." Ismailow had heard enough, and concluded the conversation by saying with a smile, "Well, you will probably be able to provide him more fair ornaments to his Harem, on your next visit to Circassia; I wish you a good journey." He then hastened to communicate this interesting news to his master.

The hope of Zarman revived when he was informed of the residence of Myrrha. He proceeded without delay to Permania, and on the third day of his jour-

ney, came in sight of the Harem which contained all that was dear to him on earth. His heart throbbed with tumultuous emotions of hope and fear, as he beheld the high wall which surrounded this abode of secluded beauty, and he stood gazing at it in silence till rouzed by Ismailow. "Courage, master!" said that sprightly companion, "we shall outwit Mustapha. We must first amuse the villagers with our music, and it is possible that we may be sent for by the luxurious Turk. If we can once get into the Harem, my life for it Myrrha shall get out. Agreeably

to

to this advice our adventurers entered the village, playing a lively tune. Their music was delightful, and the Turkish young men danced before them; but the custom of the country prohibited a promiscuous assembly of the sexes in public.

In less than a week the musicians were admitted into the houses of the most opulent men in the village, and were engaged to play for their amusement while at dinner. Mustapha happened to visit one of his neighbours, who had engaged the Circassians to play during a sumptuous

banquet. The Turk was delighted with the melody of Zarman's flute, and the lively dexterity of Ismailow in the management of his tambourine; he could see no danger in the introduction of two unarmed foreigners into his house, and commanded their attendance on the morning of the following day. Zarman's heart leaped for joy! He had now a prospect of again beholding Myrrha, and though she might have been compelled to submit to the desires of the Turk, he was convinced that her affection for him was unimpaired.

Next morning the Circassians were admitted into Mustapha's Harem. They were conducted through the extensive court-yard, into a garden; the spot where they were to stand was pointed out, and on a signal given, the ladies of the Harem, to the number of fifty, appeared glittering in the most gorgeous apparel. They wore thin veils, which partly masked their faces; and on coming to the square space, at the end of which the musicians stood, they seated themselves on small sofas, placed on each side of a grass plat.

The approach of Mustapha was announced by an eunuch; the ladies arose and saluted him with the customary salim; he walked forward, and taking one of his fair favourites by the hand, addressed her in a tone of tenderdess. It was Myrrha, the object of Zarman's search, that now stood beside his powerful rival. "Fair Myrrha," said the Turk, "I have admitted two of thy countrymen for thy gratification, they are musicians, and their music will doubtless be agreeable to thee and many of thy country women who are present; let a smile of cheerfulness then adorn thy lovely face,

face, and do not pine in hopeless melancholy." Mustapha then waved his hand as a signal for the musicians to begin, and Zarman played one of those plaintive amatory tunes with which he had often amused his once happy Myrrha.

The fair Circassian was deeply affected. The tears bedewed her cheeks, she could hardly suppress her sobs, for the sweet sounds of Zarman's flute brought to her remembrance the hours of felicity which she had enjoyed with her lover, in her native village. She had no idea that Zarman stood

before her, till a livelier air played by him, and accompanied by Ismailow on the tambourine, strongly excited her attention.—It was the same that he had repeatedly played in her father's cottage: this coincidence started her—she gazed at the musicians, and recognized the countenance of her beloved Zarman. She uttered a low shriek, but the noise of the tambourine happily prevented Mustapha from hearing it. Her whole soul was absorbed in reflection, when the Turk ordered the musicians to pause; and the ladies of the Harem, with the exception of Myrrha and two others,

others, prepared to amuse their master by displaying their agility in the dance.

While the ladies tripped along the verdant turf, to the gratification of Mustapha, the invention of Myrrha was on the wing to devise some mode of escape with Zarman, as she was convinced he could have no other motive for travelling to Turkey, but his affection for her. There was not a moment to be lost; this was the only time the musicians might be admitted, she therefore contrived to scrawl a few words with a pencil on a piece of paper, which

she concealed beneath her, when Zarman, whose eyes were watchful of all her motions, observed the billett which she held for a moment in her half opened hand—by a slight inclination of the head he convinced her of his attention, and when the dance was ended, and the ladies prepared to retire, Mustapha walked before them, and Myrrha as she passed the musicians dropped the bit of paper at the foot of Zarman, unperceived by her companions.

Zarman stooped down, and under pretence of loosing one of his sandals, he hastily seized the

precious billett, placed it in his bosom, and retired with Ismailow. Each of the musicians was rewarded with a piece of gold, and dismissed at the entrance of the house; and Zarman hastened on the wings of hope and love to a field in its vicinity, where he could peruse the letter unembarrassed. He read with raptures the following short instructions:—

"Zarman, my love, my heart "is still faithful! come this "night at twelve o'clock, to "the southern end of the Harem; "you can easily ascend the outer

"wall by a rope ladder; I shall be
"at the third window from the
"Eastern angle. I am ready to es-
"cape with you at the risk of life.
"Adieu! may Alla bless us with
"success!"

At the appointed hour, Zarman, accompanied by Ismailow, and both armed with daggers, approached the harem. The night was extremely dark—Zarman ascended the wall, and beheld the glimmer of a taper in Myrrha's apartment; her lattice was open, and she stood in expectation of her lover's arrival. He descended with successful haste, and by the aid of his ladder conveyed

veyed Myrrha from her chamber to the field which surrounded the harem. The lovely Circassian embraced her dear deliverer with tears of joy—she was again free! delightful thought!—but the danger of being retaken terrified her soul, and she ran to the entrance of the village almost breathless with haste and apprehension.

Three excellent horses, provided by Ismailow, were immediately mounted, and the lovers, instead of proceeding to Constantinople, thought it adviseable to retire to the mountainous regions, which were at the distance of about ten leagues.

leagues. The precaution of Ismailow had prepared a Turkish dress for Myrrha, his master, and himself, and making up their Circassian habit into a bundle, he carried it with him, to be worn on their approach to their native country.

After a tedious and fatiguing journey, the fortunate lovers came once more in sight of the Caucasus, and arrived in safety at the cottage of Orloff, whose joy on their return was extreme. The cottager informed Zarman of the favourable change in Raynorskoi's sentiments, which encouraged him to return to the mansion of his father, who received

ceived him with joyful congratulations.

Zarman had departed from his presence dejected and sickly; he now returned with an aspect animated with health and cheerfulness. This happy change was effected by the recovery of Myrrha, and Raynorskoi was no longer averse to the union of lovers who seemed destined for each other.

Mr. Sotheran was introduced to the Usden and his son, on the day prior to that appointed for the nuptials of the latter, and he was invited to the entertainment provided for

for the occasion. He had the satisfaction to behold the marriage of Zarman and Myrrha solemnized in the presence of the principal inhabitants of the district; and their romantic story was, with the permission of the bridegroom, communicated to the travellers by Ismailow.

From Circassia Mr. Sotheran proceeded to Turkey, and arrived in the Ottoman capital in perfect health. At this city he dismissed Michaelof, that faithful Cossack, who had been his guide over the extensive tracts of Tartary and Circassia,

cassia, and rewarded his services by a liberal present.

At Constantinople Mr. Sotheran, and his servant Kelly, felt as if they were in a state of confinement, for they were not permitted to walk abroad without two Jannizaries as a guard; who with drawn scymitars walked before them, exclaiming as they entered a crowd, "make way for these Christians." A man accustomed to the inestimable blessings of liberty could find little happiness in the Turkish capital, Mr. Sotheran, therefore, took but a cursory survey of the city and its inhabitants.

Con-

Constantinople is fourteen miles in circumference. It is built in the form of a harp, and surrounded with a high wall, flanked with two hundred and fifty towers, with battlements and embrazures. There is a communication by twenty-two gates with the port, the extensive suburbs, and the adjacent country. And Mr. Sotheran was delighted with the prospect of the lesser Asia from one of the highest towers of the city.

The population of the city, which is estimated at seven hundred thousand, is comprised of Turks, Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, who, in their various

various garbs, presented a curious and busy assemblage to the eyes of Mr. Sotheran in the bazars, which are large square buildings for the purposes of commerce. Another scene of traffic presented itself in the slave-market, where a number of youthful females, in the bloom of beauty, were exposed to sale. With the exception of the mosques, many of which were magnificent, the Ottoman capital appeared much inferior to Paris and London; the streets in general were narrow, dirty, and crowded, and the manners of the people disgusting.

After

After a stay of a month, during which, Mr. Sotheran lodged in the Pera, a suburb, which is the principal residence of the Christians, he sailed for London in the Britannia, and arrived in his native country after an absence of eight years.

But his return to London only revived the recollection of his misfortunes. He therefore made frequent excursions to various parts of the country. In one of these rambles he happened to stop at Norton-Goodrich; the rural beauty and calm retirement which it offered to his imagination, induced him to choose it as a temporary abode; and the

the influence of female beauty in the person of Lucinda, once more bound him captive to love.

CHAP-

CHAPTER VI.

Meeting of Lucinda and Mr. Sotheran—they are married in France—return to England—revisit Norton—joy and festivity of the villagers.

THE arrival of Mr. Sotheran at the residence of Madame Vallery was announced to Lucinda at an early hour. An animated blush of modesty and joy brightened her countenance for a moment, and was succeeded by a momentary paleness, occasioned by the perturbation

bation of her gentle bosom. She hastened to meet the man whom she loved; she found him alone in the parlour, and forgetful of every thing but his merit and affection, she received his embrace with the rapture of exalted love.

In a moment, however, she gently disengaged herself, and with tottering steps sunk down on a seat, while Sotheran expressed his joy in the simple and affecting language of tenderness.

After a sufficient interval, Madame Vallery sent a polite summons to the lovers, inviting them to break-

breakfast, and Mr. Sotheran was introduced by his blushing Lucinda, to that female friend who had been instrumental to her preservation.

From the manly ease and cheerful candour of her visitor, Madame Vallery perceived the goodness of his heart; and expressed, in a handsome manner, the satisfaction she felt at the prospect of Lucinda being placed under the protection of a man so well qualified to be her protector.

Mr. Sotheran expressed his grateful sense of his obligations to the friend of his Lucinda, and in the course

course of the day he had an opportunity of observing the amiable manners of Madame Vallery and her daughters. In the afternoon he enjoyed the satisfaction of a solitary walk in the garden with his mistress, who, with blushing hesitation, and in the tremulous accents of tenderness mingled with apprehension, informed him of the wish that her French friend had expressed to learn his history. She also hinted Madame Vallery's motive for this request. "Not," continued the lovely girl, with downcast eyes, "Not that I have the least doubt of your virtue and honour, but my friend seems to think an explicit

account of your real situation in life, indispensible." "She is right, my love," replied he, pressing the hand which he held to his heart, "she shall know the story of my misfortunes, and if you think proper, Lucinda, you shall also be present during the explanation." "No, Sir," replied the amiable maid, "I never doubted your integrity, I only mention the scruples of others."

In the evening Mr. Sotheran recounted the principal incidents of his life to Madam Vallery, and thus removed every doubt of his honourable attachment to Lucinda, who heard

heard the eclaircissement from her friend with unutterable joy.

Mr. Sotheran entreated his Lucinda to consent to an immediate union, and thus prevent the future attempts of malice to interrupt their happiness; she consented, and on the following day the marriage was solemnized, in the presence of Madam Vallery, her daughters, Mr. Hartley, and Kelly, that confidential servant, who had accompanied his master through all his vicissitudes.

The behaviour of Lucinda on this occasion, was agreeable to the

whole tenour of her blameless life. It was modest, delicate, and decorous; and the acquisition of such a consort would have been a sufficient recompence to any man of sentiment for years of adversity. In the estimation of Sotheran she was little less than angelic, and he looked forward to years of connubial felicity, instead of his former unhappiness in the matrimonial state.

At the expiration of a week the happy couple bade adieu to Madame Vallery and her daughters, and accompanied by Hartley repaired to Calais, where a packet just ready to sail in a few hours carried them in

safety to the blissful coast of Albion.

On the arrival at Dover they proceeded in a post chariot to London, and as Mrs. Sotheran expressed much solicitude to revisit her parents, an elegant new coach, with a splendid retinue, conveyed her to the peaceful retirement of Norton-Goodrich.

Mrs. Sotheran was received by her parents with tears of joy, and the villagers to whom her husband had been so liberal, came with their children to welcome their benefactor. Their honest and artless con-

gratulations, were received by Mr. Sotheran with glistening eyes; and when he perceived Mr. Norman hastening through the crowd he stepped forward and met him with a cordial shake of the hand, and enquiries respecting his wife and son.

A plentiful entertainment regaled the villagers in farmer Greenhill's barn; and a select party, consisting of the farmer, his dame, Mr. and Mrs. Norman, and the two Miss Willoughbys, shared the delights of an elegant repast and pleasing conversation with Mr. Sotheran and his amiable consort. At night the villagers gave demonstrations of their

joy

joy by a large bonfire, which they surrounded, while their repeated acclamations filled the air.

CHAPTER XII.

Amicable arrangements.—A reformed Rake.—A wedding.—Another wedding.

CONCLUSION.

THE morning after Mr. Sotheran's return to Norton, he visited the free school, and was delighted with the cleanliness, regularity, and order, which prevailed throughout the establishment. Several of the boys had, under the tuition of Mr. Norman, made a commendable progress in grammar and arith-

arithmetic ; while the the younger pupils were instructed in the elements of their mother tongue, by the schoolmaster, who had been originally engaged for that purpose.

Actuated by a munificent disposition, Mr. Sotheran presented Mr. Norman with the farm and Rose Hill cottage, with a proviso that he should patronize the free-school, and instruct the children of the husbandmen in its vicinity, who might think proper to avail themselves of the opportunity. "I shall also continue a few days at the cottage with my

my family," said the benevolent donor, "till the mansion on my estate in Norfolk is prepared for our reception. I have written to my steward on that subject, but even after my removal I shall be gratified by a correspondence with you." The grateful feelings of Mr. Norman for some moments prevented utterance; but his silence was eloquent; the big drops of sensibility stood in his eyes, and his patron changed the subject by saying, "Spare both me and yourself on this occasion, my friend; I have no doubt but you will prove a proper succes-

sor to me in Rose Hill cottage."

A visit from Miss Greaves, the ward of the Mysterious Farmer, enlivened the little party at Rose Hill. The accession of a beautiful and accomplished young lady, was no inconsiderable improvement to the social group; and the arrival of Mr. Hartley on the subsequent day rendered this retirement still more interesting.

Hartley was received by his friend with the generous cordiality

ality of esteem; his reformation, in which he had made a considerable progress while he accompanied Mr. Sotheran to France, was now established on the basis of an honourable attachment.—Miss Greaves was the object of his affection, his assiduities were by no means disagreeable. He was indeed some years older, being in his thirty-fourth year; but he was still in the prime of life, and with a pleasing person, elegant in manners, and a well-informed mind, he was a charming companion to an intelligent young lady. As such Miss

Greaves

Greaves considered him, and the approbation of Mr. Sotheran, which was a mere formality, was only requisite to establish the union of the lovers.

This intelligence which was communicated by Mr. Hartley to his friend, excited a delightful emotion in the breast of Mr. Sotheran, who with warm congratulations felicitated him on this laudable determination to return to virtue. "You have, however, chosen the flowery instead of the thorny path of reformation, Hartley," said he with a smile, "for

"for Miss Greaves might make a more difficult convert than you; she is an amiable and excellent young lady, and I wish you both uninterrupted happiness.

In the course of a few days the marriage of Miss Greaves and Mr. Hartley was solemnized at Rose Hill. Mr. Sotheran, as guardian to the bride, officiated as a parent at the ceremony; the day was considered as a festival, and the villagers were entertained with good cheer, at the expence of the bridegroom.

Of

Of all Mr. Sotheran's faithful friends, Kelly alone remained unprovided for. Mrs. Hartley, mindful of his former services, insisted on his acceptance of five hundred pounds, and his generous master rewarded his fidelity with an annuity of fifty pounds.

This sudden prosperity did not inflate Kelly with unbecoming pride, it only gave him an opportunity to avow his passion for Miss Willoughby, a young woman whose gaiety and wit were quite in union with his own disposition.

Nor did she like a prude reject her suitor, for Kelly was in her estimation a much more agreeable person than his master, or indeed any other man with whom she was acquainted. With these sentiments she accepted his proffered hand—they were married, and whatever scruples farmer Willoughby might have had with regard to the native country or station of his son-in-law, were removed by the persuasive arguments of the handsome competence and independence which were the reward of his merit.

All

All parties being thus as happily established as they could wish, we shall leave them to the enjoyment of their merited felicity.

THE END.

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